

Facts About **STERILIZATION FOR MEN (VASECTOMY)**



What does it mean to have a vasectomy?

A vasectomy is an operation that permanently closes the tubes that carry sperm. After a man has a vasectomy, he is not able to father children. Once this operation is done, no other type of birth control is needed during sex to prevent pregnancy.

How does it work?

Sperm travel through tubes (called *vas deferens*) to become part of a man's semen (come). The operation blocks the tubes so no sperm can get through. Because there are no sperm in the man's semen, the man's sexual discharge (ejaculation) cannot cause a pregnancy.

How well does it work?

Having a vasectomy works very well to prevent pregnancy. A very small percentage of men (about 1 in 1,000) who have had this operation may still be able to get a woman pregnant. Sterilization (vasectomy in men and tubal ligation in women) is the most effective way to prevent a pregnancy except not having sex.

How long does it last?

When a man has a vasectomy, it is permanent. This means the man will not be able to father children at any time in the future. This is why a man must be very sure he does not want to have any children in the future.

What if a man has a vasectomy and changes his mind?

Only men who are very sure they do not want to father any more children should have a vasectomy operation. Reversing a vasectomy is very hard to do and many times cannot be done. If a man is not sure about fathering a child in the future, another birth control method (condoms, for example) should be used.

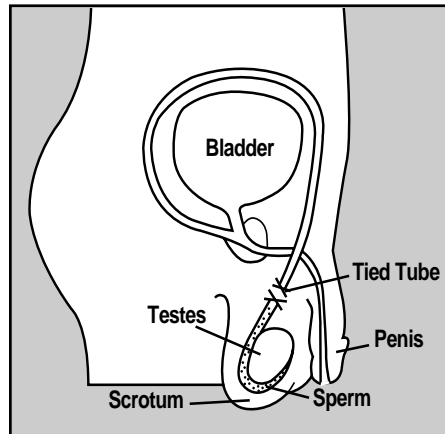


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How is a vasectomy done?

The doctor makes a very small cut in the sack (scrotum) which holds the testicles to reach the two tiny tubes which carry the sperm (male seed) out of the body. The doctor cuts and seals off the ends of these tubes so the sperm cannot leave the body.



Does it hurt to have a vasectomy?

During the operation, a man usually does not have pain because the doctor will give the man medicine so he cannot feel anything (a local anesthetic). After the medicine wears off, the man may feel some soreness or a little pain, just like any other minor surgery. Wearing an athletic supporter or jock strap after the surgery may help.

Do they take out or change any male sex organs during a vasectomy?

No. The operation does not touch the penis or the testicles. The man will keep making male hormones and semen (come) the same way as before the operation.

Does having a vasectomy change a man's sexual desire or ability to have sex?

No. After having a vasectomy, a man will still be able to feel sexual desire, have erections (get hard) and come (ejaculate) as before the operation. The only difference is that the semen (come) that is ejaculated has no sperm in it. Many men feel greater pleasure since there is no worry about starting a pregnancy.

Will there be any problems if a man has a vasectomy?

Because having a vasectomy is an operation, problems can happen. Most men do not have problems when they have this operation and it is very rare to have a bad problem. The problems a man can have are bleeding, swelling around where the cut is made or an infection. In most cases, these problems go away in a few days.

How soon can a man have sex after the operation?

A man can have sex as soon as he wishes after having a vasectomy. Most men wait a few days. Because some sperm may still be in the tubes, a good birth control method must still be used until the doctor can tell for sure (with a test) that the man's semen (come) does not have any sperm in it.

When can a man have a vasectomy operation?

A man can have a vasectomy at any time. In order for Medicaid to pay for this operation, the man must be at least 21, qualify for Medicaid on the day of the operation and have signed the form giving permission to do the operation 30 days ahead of time. Once the papers have been signed, a man can change his mind at any time.

REMEMBER:

A vasectomy will not keep you from getting AIDS and other diseases you can get when you have sex. Use a latex condom to protect yourself.